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where a temporary Seri rancheria was found occupied by about sixty of the tribe, including subchief Mashém, who speaks Spanish. In this part of the work the expedition was accompanied by Señor Pascual Encinas, the owner of the rancho visited, and doubtless the best informed white man concerning the habits, customs, personnel, and habitat of the tribe. About a week was spent in intercourse with the occupants of the rancheria, when the studies were brought to an end through the illness of Señor Encinas, and the consequent necessity for return to Hermosillo. The expedition then proceeded northwestward and northward along a route so laid as to define the western limits of Papagueria proper, and reached Tucson near the end of the year. In addition to the leader, the party comprised Mr William Dinwiddie, photographer; José Lewis, Papago interpreter, and E. P. Cunningham, teamster. The outfit was furnished chiefly by Mr J. M. Berger, of San Xavier (near Tucson). On the visit to the Seri frontier the party was accompanied by Señor Encinas, Don Arturo Alvemar-Leon (who acted as Spanish interpreter), and two or three attachés of Molino del Encinas.[1]

The second expedition was directed primarily toward investigation of the Seri, and only incidentally to continuation of the researches among the Papago. Outfitting at Tucson in October (again with the aid of Mr Berger), the expedition proceeded southward by a route different from those previously traversed, and carried forward a plane-table route survey covering a considerable zone from the international boundary at Sasabe to Rio Sonóra. Descending the previously unmapped course of Rio Bacuache, the expedition reached the Rancho de San Francisco de Costa Rica on December 1, 1895, and, although conditions were found unfavorable in that the Seri were on the warpath, immediately prepared for the extension of the work into Seriland.

A preliminary trip was made into the mainland portion of the Seri habitat, terminating at the crest of Johnson peak, the highest point in Sierra Seri. The triangulation and topographic surveys were carried over the territory traversed, and several points were fixed on Isla Tiburon; but the natives, agitated by a skirmish with vaqueros on the frontier a day or two earlier, had withdrawn to remoter parts of the territory, and were not encountered. The party returned to Costa Rica, a rude boat was completed, transported across the desert via Pozo Escalante to Embarcadero Andrade, and launched in Bahia Kunkaak. The surveys were extended to the southern portion of Sierra Seri and Isla Tasnne, and, after various difficulties and delays due to dearth of fresh water, to gales, and to other causes, the party (enlarged for the purpose) finally landed on Tiburon. Many Seri rancherias were found on

[1] The more noteworthy details of the organization and work of the two expeditions are set forth in the administrative reports of the Bureau for the fiscal years 1894-95 and 1895-96. Certain members of this party are shown in the accompanying half tone, forming plate II: Señor Encinas seated at the end of the table, his son, Don Manuel (mentioned), and Don Ygnacio Lonzain at his right; a grandson behind him, and Señor Alvemar-Leon seated at his left, with Mashém kneeling over the table in the foreground.

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114 both sides of Bahia Kanksak and El Infiernillo. Some of these had been occupied almost to the hour of the visit, but the occupants [123] had taken flight, leaving most of their unattached possessions behind, and were not seen, though it was evident that, like wary birds and game animals, they kept the invaders in sight from points of vantage and hidden lairs. The eastern scarps and foot-slopes of Sierra Kanksak were traversed extensively and repeatedly; its crest was crossed by Mr Johnson with a small party at a point west of Punta Narraganett, [126] and the triangulation and topographic sketching were connected with the work on the mainland and carried over practically the entire surface of the island, being tied to the work of the Hydrographic Office about the coasts. Then, despairing of finding the wary natives, and having exhausted food supplies, the party returned to the mainland and thence to Costa Rica, arriving in the evening of December 31.

The original party comprised, in addition to the leader, Mr Willard D. Johnson, topographer; Mr J. W. Mitchell, photographer; Hugh Norris, Papago interpreter, and José Contrares, teamster. The party engaged in the expedition to Sierra Seri comprised the leader, Messrs Johnson and Mitchell, Mr L. K. Thompson of Hermosillo, Don Andrés Noriega of Costa Rica, José Contrares, and two Papago Indian guards, Miguel and Anton, of Costa Rica. The Tiburon party was made up of the leader, Messrs Johnson and Mitchell, S. C. Millard of Los Angeles, and Señores Andrés Noriega and Ygnacio Lozania, together with Ruperto Alvarez, a Yaqui Indian guard, and Miguel, Anton, Mariana, Anton Ortiz, and Anton Castillo, Papago guards; while Hugh Norris and José Contrares, with half a dozen Papago guards and other attachés of the rancho at Costa Rica, maintained an intermittent supply station at Embarcadero Andrade. Señor Encinas cooperated in the work of the expedition, part of the time at Costa Rica and part at Molino del Encinas, his principal hacienda in the outskirts of Hermosillo; while Mr Thompson and Dr W. J. Lyons aided in the work, the former at both Hermosillo and Costa Rica and the latter at Hermosillo.

The return trip from Costa Rica lay via Hermosillo, and permitted the extension of the plane-table surveys to this longitude. While at the city advantage was taken of the opportunity to obtain linguistic [115] and other data from "El General" Kolusio, a full-blood Seri retained at the capital by the State for occasional duty as a Seri interpreter, who was obligingly assigned to the service of the party by Señor Don Ramón Corral, then governor of Sonora. At Hermosillo the leader of the expedition left the main party, which then proceeded northwestward and northward along the route followed by the 1894 expedition on the return journey, the party comprising Mr Johnson, in charge, with Messrs Mitchell and Millard, Hugh Norris, and José Contrares; and the plane-table surveys were continued and combined with the route surveys made on the outward journey.

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to be their only aim, and every arrow or lance thrown by the Ceris that pierces the skin causes death, as all are poisoned. Many expeditions, fitted out at a great expense, have been sent against them; but, though commanded by competent officers, all have failed. The number being so small, they manage when pursued to conceal themselves where they can not be found. The island of Tiburon, as well as the mainland adjacent, is exceedingly barren and destitute of water; hence parties have suffered greatly in the campaigns against them, without accomplishing anything. I was told that the Government had already expended more than $1,000 for every male of the tribe. The last serious attack of these people was made upon a gentleman traveling to Guaymas in his carriage with his family and attendants, embracing 18 persons. They were surprised in an unfrequented place and every soul put to death.[1]

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Commissioner Bartlett quoted Hardy's description of the arrow poison, and, speaking of the Seri tongue, added:

I found it an extremely harsh language, very difficult to express with our letters, and totally different from any aboriginal tongue I had heard spoken; . . . but it was impossible for me, without a close philological comparison with other Indian languages, to arrive at any correct conclusion as to whether this people are allied or not to other aboriginal tribes.

He also referred to a prevalent notion that "the Ceris were of Asiatic origin, in proof of which some statements were made too improbable to repeat. This idea seems to have originated from the resemblance between their name and that given by the ancients to the Chinese."

In order to obtain a Seri vocabulary, Commissioner Bartlett had a messenger dispatched "to a pueblo or village of these Indians near Hermosillo. The person sent for made his appearance in a few hours"; he was "a good-looking man, about 30 years of age. His complexion was fair, and resembled that of an Asiatic rather than an American Indian. His cheek bones were high, and his head round and well formed, though the anterior portion was somewhat angular and prominent. His hair was short, straight, and black. He was a full-blooded Ceris, and came originally from the island of Tiburon. In about three hours I completed the vocabulary quite satisfactorily to myself."[2] The vocabulary was not printed with the narrative; nor were references made to the Seri population, either in the pueblo or in Seriland.

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While the vocabulary was not published by Commissioner Bartlett, it was preserved and passed into the hands of George Gibbs, who made a systematic transcript;[3] this came into possession of Dr Albert S. Gatschet, and a copy is preserved in the archives of the Bureau of American Ethnology. The name of the native informant is not recorded, but fortunately he was found still living, and was fully identified, during the expeditions of 1894 and 1895—especially toward the end of the

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[1] Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua, Connected with the United States and Mexican Boundary Commission, during the years 1850, '51, '52, and '53; New York, 1854, vol. i, p. 403 et seq.

[2] Ibid., pp. 405–406.

[3] This transcript is entered in a blank schedule Vocabulary of 100 Words, printed by the Smithsonian Institution for Gibbs, with a supplementary sheet; it is dated January 1, 1852; and while the published "Narrative" implies that it was recorded December 31, 1851, the manuscript date is confirmed by the Seri interpreter, Kolasio.

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115 latter, when, on January 4, 1896, he was employed as an informant. He was then a fine-looking man of noble stature and figure, and of notably dignified air and manner, dressed in conventional attire; his hair was luxuriant, iron-gray in color, and trimmed in Mexican fashion. His looks indicated an age of about 70, but in his own opinion (which was corroborated by that of Señor Pascual Encinas and other old acquaintances) he was at least 75. His movements were vigorous, his eyes clear and bright, his vision good, and, except for hardly perceptible imperfection of hearing, he was in full possession of normal faculties. He was in the employ of the state as a trustworthy attaché of the governor's palacio, where his services were nominal; his real function was that of a Seri interpreter in case of need; and on the day specified he was temporarily assigned to the service of the expedition by His Excellency Governor Corral. By Mexican acquaintances he was commonly called Fernando, though he called himself Kolusio, sometimes using the former designation as a forename; he was also known as "El General" (= Chief), or "El General de los Seris". He had a vague memory of Tiburon island, which he left in childhood (at about 6 years of age, according to his estimate) and had never revisited, though he had been on the Seri border so late as 1870. Except when temporarily at Rancho San Francisco de Costa Rica, he had lived in Pueblo Seri, usually reporting in Hermosillo daily for such duty as might be assigned to him at the palacio. He was aware that he was regarded as a tribal outlaw, and admitted that no consideration could induce him to approach Seriland, since he would be slain by his tribesmen more eagerly than any alien; indeed, he hardly dared venture so far westward as Molino del Encinas, in the outskirts of Hermosillo, and only did so in daylight or in company of others. His few kinsfolk in Pueblo Seri had died or deserted so long before that he had forgotten names and dates; and, as he remarked with half-realized pathos, he had been alone amid aliens for very many years ("muy muchos años"). The linguistic inquiries put to him reminded him of previous interrogations of the sort, and he voluntarily described the visit of a distinguished American who, a long time ago (more than 40 years, he thought), came down from Ures, with many books and papers, and spent New Year's day in interrogating him about his language and his people. He was much impressed with the ability displayed by the "Gringo muy grande" in writing the terms and afterward repronouncing them properly; and he described the visitor as appearing very pale and sick ("muy palido y malo"), and under the necessity of frequently resting and taking medicine, and also as having wavy hair, worn so long as to hang down over the neck and shoulders. He could not recall that he had ever heard the American's name; but his description pointed clearly to Commissioner Bartlett, who had risen from a sick-bed at Ures and was on his way to Guaymas to get the benefit of a sea voyage, and who wore his hair long during a part or all of his expedition (as was subsequently

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ascertained by extended inquiry). Kolusio also remembered "giving his language" (a bold if not sacrilegious act, according to his view) to two or three other persons, (one "not a Mexicano" though speaking Spanish, none "Americanos"[1]); but the first-mentioned instance was the one most deeply impressed on his mind. At this time (1826) he retained a working knowledge of the Seri tongue, and was able to serve satisfactorily as a Spanish-Seri interpreter; yet careful test showed that he had forgotten numerous native terms, and sometimes inadvertently substituted other Indian (Yaqui, Papago, and probably Opata) and Spanish words; while he knew so little of the tribal customs and beliefs that inquiries pertaining to them were too nearly fruitless to be long pursued. Undoubtedly his knowledge of the Seri tongue was fresher and fuller in 1833; but since he was practically isolated from his tribe in early childhood, he probably never possessed much information concerning the esoteric characters of his people.

The next noteworthy scientific student of the Seri was Johann Carl Eduard Buschmann, who visited various Mexican tribes, but whose knowledge of the Seri was wholly secondhand. Quoting Villa-Señor and Arrecivita and other early writers, noting unfortunate passages from Bartlett, and magnifying Mühlenpfordt's misapprehensions into positive error, he reduced knowledge of this and neighboring tribes to chaos. The "Guaymas" were separated from the "Seris (oder Seres)", and these (at least by implication) from the "Tiburones", while the "Piatos" were combined with the Seri, the traditional alliance with the Apache was greatly overdrawn, and the "Heri oder Heris" and the "Tepocas" were treated as distinct.[2] No new facts were adduced, no use was made of local sources of information, and no notice was taken of other than literary data.

In 1857 the gigantic surveying enterprise of Jecker & Co. was undertaken, under a concession from the Government of Mexico, and the scientific surveys were intrusted to a commission headed by El Capitan Carlos Stone (General Charles Pomeroy Stone, U.S.A.). The commission headquartered at Guaymas, purchased vessels for the survey of the coast, and began operations also in the interior; Bahia Pinacati and George island (named by Hardy in 1826) were surveyed, as well as the entire Sonoran coast south of Guaymas, and "one hundred miles of coast near Tiburon", besides many hundred square miles of valuable lands. At this stage friction developed between the progressive commission and the conservative Sonorenses, which ended in the expulsion of the scientific commission by the State government.[3] By reason of the

[1] At the time of inquiry the importance of the other vocabularies was not suspected, and the interrogation was not pushed far enough to permit identification of the persons to whom they were given.

[2] Die Spuren der aztekischen Sprache im nördlichen Mexiko und höheren amerikanischen Norden. Zugleich eine Musterung der Völker und Sprachen des nördlichen Mexiko und der Westseite Nordamerikas von Grodekiaaren an bis zum Eismeer. Von Joh. Carl Ed. Buschmann (in Abhandlungen der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, aus dem Jahre 1854, zweiter Supplement-Band); Berlin, 1859, pp. 512-521 and elsewhere.

[3] Arizona and Sonora, etc., by Sylvester Mowry; New York, 1864 pp. 99-102.

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collected by Señor D. A. Tenochio and transmitted to the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics. Noting the condition of the tribe at the time, Señor Pimentel wrote:

The Seris are now reduced to a few families only, inhabiting Tiburon, especially the island of Tiburon, for which reason they are also known sometimes by the name Tiburones. The Indians called Salineros, who live on the borders of Pimeria Alta, and the Tepocas, who live toward the south, belong to the Seri nation. The Seris have always been notable for their ferocity and barbarism, preferring death in war against the whites to the adoption of civilization. They are dreaded and notorious for their arrows, poisoned with a most virulent venom [ponzoñosísimo con activísimo veneno]. They are tall and well formed, and their women are good-looking. By reason of their distrust of the whites, it has not been possible to ascertain their traditions, further than that their ancestors came from distant lands of unknown direction. Of their religion it is known that they adore daily the rising sun.[1]

After brief discussion of the grammar, and extended comparison of some sixty out of the seventy vocables selected by Señor Tenochio, he concluded:

Although in the list of Seri words consulted the foregoing reveal analogies with those of the Mexicani group, there are, without doubt, other terms belonging exclusively to the Seri or some other branch extraneous to the Mexican group; for this reason it would appear that the idiom represents a distinct family.[2]

The list of these distinct words was appended. Referring to the dialects, Señor Pimentel expressed the opinion, based on literary references, that the "Guaymas" or "Gayamas", "Upangualmas", and "Conomaques" may be considered as belonging to the Seri family.[3]

While Señor Pimentel gave credit to his informant, Señor Tenochio, he did not indicate the original source of the vocabulary; but the source may be defined approximately by a process of elimination: there is hardly a possibility that the terms were obtained from any tribesmen in Seriland, since they were all inimical to the whites, and since very few of them have ever known enough of the Spanish tongue to permit communication with the Mexicans; accordingly, it is practically certain that the Seri interpreter must have been either (1) a resident of Pueblo Seri or (2) an attaché of rancho San Francisco de Costa Rica (of which more anon); and in either case it would seem certain that the native informant could have been none other than the standard Seri-Spanish interpreter of the last half century—Kolusio. Indeed, Kolusio was, at the time, the only Seri habitué of Pueblo Seri possessing sufficient knowledge of the Spanish and enough intelligence and independence to "give his language", and was one of the two frequenters of the rancho similarly equipped.

Pimentel's contemporary, Licenciate Manuel Orozco y Berra, contributed in important measure to systematic knowledge of the Seri, which

[1] Cuadro Descriptivo y Comparativo de las Lenguas Indígenas de México, ó Tratado de Filología Mexicana, por Francisco Pimentel, segunda edicion mucho completa, tomo II; Mexico, 1875, p. 330. The first edition of the work was published in two volumes, dated, respectively, 1862 and 1865.

[2] Ibid., p. 331.

[3] Ibid., p. 330.

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to Pueblo Seri, and early in April obtained there a Seri-Spanish vocabulary of several hundred words, with a number of short phrases throwing some light on the grammatic construction. This record was transmitted to Dr Albert S. Gatschet. It comprises a title page inscribed "Vocabulario de la lengua Séri | Interprete el Gl. de los Seris | y otro Indio. | Pueblo de Seris | 4 Abril 1879"; four foolscap sheets (written on both sides, thus making 16 pages) of vocabulary; and a final page bearing two short phrases and inscribed "Los Séris, me dice el general de ellos, son como doscientos hombres de llevar armas—viven todavia parte en la isla de Tiburon, parte en la costa.' Pueblo de Seris, 4 Abril, 1879, Alph. Pinart." A transcript of this invaluable vocabulary is preserved in the Bureau of American Ethnology. There is nothing either in the original vocabulary or in the known correspondence relating to it to identify the aboriginal informant, but the identification is made easy through the coincident testimony of living witnesses and the unmistakable implication of the historical records to the effect that there was at that time but a single Seri Indian[1] resident at Pueblo Seri—i. e., the official interpreter, "El General" Kolusio. This identification is strengthened by the remarkable similarity between this vocabulary and that of Bartlett, a similarity made the more striking by the fact that one was recorded in English, the other in Spanish; the identification is supported, too, by Kolusio's memory of "giving his language" to a stranger "not a Mexicano" yet familiar with the Spanish; and the identification is practically established by the considerable number of terms expressing concepts alien to the Seri (e. g., ax, adobe, house, horse, hog, field, irrigate, pigeon, thrush, tobacco, shirt, the names of the months, etc), evidently acquired through long and intimate acquaintance with Mexican customs and domiciles and modes of thought—for all these concepts were familiar enough to Kolusio, yet to no other known Seri Indian of recent decades. Accordingly it may be deemed practically certain that M Pinart's vocabulary, like that of Commissioner Bartlett, was obtained from Kolusio; and it is at least strongly probable that both the Lavanders-Ramirez and the Tenochio-Pimentel vocabularies were derived from the same aboriginal source—an indubitably excellent source, save for the occasional interjection of alien notions, and the infrequent substitution of foreign equivalents for forgotten terms.

Barred from Seriland by the current war craze, M Pinart was prevented from obtaining much collateral information concerning the Seri; but he concluded (on grounds not stated) that "the Tepocs spoken on

[1] "The Seris, the chief tells me, comprise about 200 men fit to bear arms—they still live part on the island of Tiburon, part on the coast."

[2] M Pinart's reference to his interpreter is not only improvised but ambiguous. "Interpreter by the chief of the Seri and another Indian" might be considered to imply two Seri Indians, though it may, with equal linguistic probability, be interpreted to mean the specified Seri and another Indian; and while the temporary presence of a second Seri at the pueblo seems possible, the sum of probabilities points so clearly the other way as to demand the latter interpretation.

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gradually the condition of mutual tolerance was restored, to rest on a firmer basis than before.

Don Pascual estimates that during the dozen years of strife between his men and the Seri forces about half of the tribe were slain. The horror of the history of this period may be passed over; it may merely be noted as a casual fact that one of the two Mexicans accompanying the 1895 expedition was credited with 17 Seri heads. When he pointed out the site of his last exploit, a mile or two south of Rancho Libertad, and some incredulity was expressed, he immediately galloped to the spot and brought back a silent witness in the form of a bleached Seri skull.[1]

At the close of the war Don Pascual continued the industrial development of the plains lying east of the desert border of Seriland, received new concessions in recognition of his conquest, and developed the ranchos of Santa Ana and Libertad; but the evangelical arm of his vigorous mission gradually withered. For a dozen years the Seri looked up to "El Patron" as a quasi ruler, whose approval was requisite for the ratification of chieftainship, and through him ran a slender thread of nominal fealty to the state and the republic; yet few parasites gathered about the rancho. Mashém had gone back to his clan; and when depredations were committed at Bacuachito or elsewhere and the criminals were caught, usually through Don Pascual's instrumentality, they were sometimes haled to Hermosillo for trial, and Kolusio was kept there as the official interpreter of charges and evidence and findings. Sometime during the sixties a few Seri youths were coaxed to Pueblo Seri for education, but when they were instructed to cut their hair they slunk dejectedly to their temporary domicile, only to decamp during the ensuing night; again, in 1870, Kolusio was commissioned to bring in a few young people and a matron or two of the tribe, and succeeded in doing so just in time to encounter an epidemic of measles, from which some died, while the others shook the dust of the pueblo from their feet forever; and this last straw, added to his alien residence and his presence at the dreaded trials, broke down the tribal toleration of Kolusio and made him an outlaw forever.

In the later seventies Don Pascual's energies began to wane, while the Seri population was waxing again; and, although the Encinas frontier was protected, raids began to recur toward Bacuachito, on the ranchos southwest of Caborca, and sometimes toward Guaymas; and the hostilities then engendered have never terminated. In the eighties Don Pascual suffered from cataract, gradually losing his sight, and his rule relaxed still further; Rancho Libertad was abandoned, and a condition of armed neutrality supervened at San Francisco de Costa Rica and Santa Ana; and this condition still persists, save as occasionally modified by a crude sort of diplomacy on the part of the Seri: when blood-feud is not burning (and it is usually extinguished by the killing of an alien on the coast or some remote part of the frontier), and when no stock have

[1] The specimen described by Dr Hrdlicka, supra, p. 141.

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teeth (such as that of Jesus Omada) passed from mouth to mouth until—incredible as it may seem—the more timid Sonorenses stood in greater dread of these natural weapons of the Seri than of their brutal clubs and swift-thrown missiles, or even of their poisoned arrows; while traditions of cannibalism came up and received such general credence that the current items of Seri outrages, both in local gossip and in the Mexican and American press, customarily recounted savage butcheries ending with gruesome feastings on the raw or slightly cooked flesh of the victims. The shuddering antipathy felt for the perpetrators of these inhumanities even a thousand miles away increased toward their frontier, as light toward its source; the dread was deepened by the failure of punitive expeditions sent out again and again only to be balked by waterless sand-wastes or wrecking tideripe; and in 1894 and 1895, at least, the horror of the Seri was a daily and nightly incubus on half the citizens of Hermosillo and the tributary pueblos and ranchos, and a thorn in the flesh of the state officials.

The external history of the Seri since the spring of 1894 is fairly known, both through the direct researches and through press reports, and would seem to be typical. This era may be assumed to open with the arrival on Tiburon's shores of the sloop *Examiner*, carrying two San Francisco newspaper writers, Robinson and Logan, with two assistants, Clark and Cowell. The to-have-been-expected happened duly, save that two of the party escaped, and on reaching Guaymas advertised the disaster through correspondence and the press. Several of the accounts indicated that the two victims were not only slain but eaten, and various plans were laid in California, Arizona, and Sonora for the recovery of the bones[1]—as if, forsooth, the omniverous and strong-toothed Seri spared anything save scattered teeth and split sections of the longer shafts of skeletons the size of those of *Homo sapiens*. While in Guaymas the two survivors set up claims for indemnity, which initiated international correspondence and inquiry into the details of the affair. These details are indicated, in sufficient fulness for present purposes, in a formal communication incorporated in the international correspondence, viz:

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY,
Washington, December 14, 1894.

SIR: Early in November I visited the Seri tribe of Indians, inhabiting Tiburon island in the Gulf of California and an area of several thousand square miles of the adjacent mainland in Sonora, Mexico. The visit was for the purpose of making collections under your authority as Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; but I availed myself of the opportunity for obtaining additional information relating to the customs, habits, and history of the tribe. In addition to my own party I was accompanied by Señor Pascual Encinas, a prominent citizen of Hermosillo, and

[1] A number of Californians and Arizonians, especially H. M. Rice, of Phœnix, intimated a strong desire to join the 1895 expedition of the Bureau of American Ethnology for the express purpose of personally ascertaining the fate and seeking the remains of Robinson, who was extensively known in southern California and southwestern Arizona.

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owner of several ranches adjacent to, and one within, the territory claimed by the Seri Indians; also by Señor A. Alvemar-Leon of Hermosillo, a young Mexican gentleman educated in the United States. For Señor Encinas the Seri Indians have the highest regard, and his kindly motive in accompanying the party was to facilitate friendly intercourse with the Indians; Señor Alvemar-Leon acted as Spanish-English interpreter, and one of the tribe who speaks Spanish [Mush'm] acted as the Seri interpreter.

One of the subjects of inquiry of the Indians related to the alleged killing of two Americans by the Seri Indians on Tiburon island during last spring at a date not definitely known either to the Indians or to myself. At first the Indians were indisposed to convey information on the subject, but after receiving presents from Señor Encinas and myself, and friendly assurances from the former, the interpreter for the tribe confessed the crime and detailed the circumstances, denying, however, that any of the Indians present at the place of conference (Rancho de San Francisco de Costa Rica, 17 leagues west-southwest of Hermosillo and near the coast) participated.

According to the first account given through the Indian interpreter, the Indians on the island saw a small vessel approach the shore of the island, and saw four men land therefrom in a small boat. The spokesman among the strangers made inquiry, chiefly by signs, as to whether game was abundant in the interior of the island, and was by signs answered in the affirmative by the chief of the tribe, who displayed a letter of authority from the state officials at Hermosillo. Then the strangers divided, two remaining on the shore by the small boat, while the spokesman and another, accompanied by several Indians, started toward the interior of the island. When they were some distance away—the account continues—some of the Indians remaining on shore indicated by signs a desire to borrow the rifle of one of the two men on the beach, and after some parley the rifle was turned over to them; then the Indians desired also to borrow the small boat in which the party of white men had landed, and after one of the two men remaining on the shore was put aboard the vessel, this, too, was placed in the hands of the Indians. Thereupon several of the Indians entered the small boat, carrying the white man's rifle, and rowed around a headland a short distance away. Passing this point they landed and a part of them ran quickly into the interior in such direction as to intercept the course of the white men. There they lay in wait until the strangers appeared, when they shot the spokesman, killing him almost instantly. On this the second white man cried out for help, whereupon he too was shot and wounded, and then (according to the first account) ran away and concealed himself in the bushes and was seen no more. The Indians who had borrowed the boat then went back to the shore, and reentered the boat with the intention of returning and capturing the fine vessel of the strangers; but as they approached the vessel, being at the time quite near the shore, the man on board arose suddenly with a gun pointed toward them and shouted, whereupon they dropped the borrowed gun and, leaping from the boat, ran away among the mesquite bushes, all escaping unhurt. The white man on the beach then, as the account ran, leaped into the boat, and, recovering his gun, rowed to the vessel and got aboard, when the two men at once made sail and escaped down the bay.

The foregoing account was given to Señor Encinas alone by the Indians through their interpreter, and was afterward conveyed to me through Señor Alvemar-Leon. Both of us recognized the incongruity with the character of the Seri Indians of that part of the narrative relating to the wounding and escape of the second man, and Señors Encinas and Leon and myself sought to impress the improbability of the account on the interpreter. Subsequently the Indians, through their interpreter, conveyed to Señor Encinas a modification of the account (after adhering to the first version for twenty-four hours), which agreed in all essential respects with the first, excepting the supplementary statement that some of the Indians (but neither the party who accompanied the white men nor those who followed in the boat) ran after the wounded man, caught him, shot him again—whereupon he again cried out—and

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them killed him with stones. This modified account, also, Señor Encinas duly conveyed to me. 124

Still later, in collecting linguistic material through the Seri interpreter with the assistance of Señor Alvarez-Lobo, I recurred to the subject incidentally (or at least ostensibly so) on two or three occasions, partly with the view of verifying or disproving the current report that the men were eaten by the Indians; and since the first distrust on the part of the interpreter and the companions (by whom he was commonly surrounded) had worn off, the questions were answered freely and with apparent truth. In brief, the information gained in this way was a repetition in general terms of the statement of the killing of both men; but the responses indicated (1) that the Indians are not cannibals, (2) that they do not eat any portion or portions of the body of an enemy slain in war, (3) that they do not eat human flesh in a sacrificial way, and (4), specifically, that they did not eat the flesh of the two white men killed last spring. I am disposed to give credence to all of these statements. 648 [266]

Señor Encinas informed me that for a long time after the reputed killing of the two Americans on the island the Seri were exceptionally shy and were seldom seen on the mainland; that the first representatives of the tribe to appear were one or two old women who came to his rancho with much trepidation; that these representatives being not ill-treated, a man appeared, who was also well treated, and that still later other members of the tribe appeared, though it was only a few days before our visit that any considerable body of the Seri Indians showed themselves at their favorite mainland haunt on his rancho. It was his first communication with the Indians since the killing, and, both he and they agreed, the first confession of the crime outside of their own tribe. 648

While in Sonora various conflicting accounts of the affair were given me. One, to which I was disposed to attach credence by reason of the character of my informant and his explanation of the circumstances under which the information was gained, was given me (just before the visit referred to above) by ex-Consul Forbes, of Guaymas. This account corresponds in all essential details with that conveyed to my party by the Indians, except that, according to Mr Forbes' account, the survivors were altogether unarmed after the borrowing of the rifle by the Indians, and that when the man in the boat arose suddenly and shouted he pointed at the Indians not a gun but a stick, in the hope of deceiving them thereby, as he was fortunate enough to do. 115 124 648

It may be added that the Seri Indians are at the same time the most primitive and the most bloodthirsty and treacherous of the Indians of North America, so far as my knowledge extends; also that their character is well known throughout Sonora, and indeed generally throughout Mexico, Arizona, and the southern part of California. I was assured by the acting governor of Sonora and by the prefect of Hermosillo that it would be little short of suicide for even a Mexican official to visit these Indians or land on their island without an armed guard. Through conference with the Indians, also, I learned that any white man, Mexican, or Indian of another tribe coming in contact with them is killed without the slightest compunction, unless they are restrained by fear. Accordingly I am satisfied that the character of the Seri Indians is quite as bad as the unsavory reputation they have acquired throughout the Southwest. 181 648

It should be observed that while the Indians were unable to give the names of the men killed, their description of men and vessel agreed exactly with those of the newspaper correspondent Robinson and his companion, and with the sloop *Evanieve*; and Mr Forbes' information was obtained direct from the survivors of the expedition of which Mr Robinson had charge. There can thus be no doubt that it was Mr Robinson and his companion who were killed by these Indians, and whose killing was confirmed by them, as set forth above. 124 648

With great respect, your obedient servant,

W J McGee,
Ethnologist in charge.

Honorable S. P. Langley,
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

TRIBAL FEATURES

DEFINITION AND NOMENCLATURE

According to Mashém and the clanmother known as Juana María, the proper name of the tribe known as Seri is *K'ahóak* (the first vowel obscure and the succeeding consonant nasalized; perhaps *K'ᵊ-hóak* or *K'ᵊ-hóak* would better express the sound). According to Kolusio, as rendered by M. l'Pinart, the Seri term for people or nation is *kwa-kak*, while the Seri people are designated specifically as *Kmike*, this designation being practically equivalent phonetically (and doubtless somatically) to Sr Tenochio's general term for women, *kmyéi*. Mashém was unable or unwilling to give the precise signification of the tribal appellation used by him, merely indicating Juana María and one or two other elderwomen squatting near as examples or types; but comparison of the elements of the term with those used in other vocables affords a fairly clear inkling as to its meaning. The syllable *kwa* (or *kᵊ*, *kwa*, *kaa*, etc.) certainly connotes age and woman, and apparently connotes also life or living (*kwa-kaiz*=an old woman, McGee; *kwa ma* wife, *ekwa*=alive, Hartlett; *kikhama* wife, *kmam kikhamama* married woman, *Yak kwa*=Yaqui tribe, l'Pinart; *kwa-kabre*=an old woman, Tenochio), the forms being distinct from the word for woman (*kmaam*, McGee; *ik-maam*, Hartlett; *kmam*, l'Pinart and Tenochio) and widely different from the term for man (*ka-tham*, McGee; *ik-tam*, Hartlett; *ktam*, l'Pinart; *tam*, Tenochio) with its several combining variants; there are also indications in numerous vocables that it connotes person or personality. On the whole, the syllable appears to be an ill-formulated or uncrystallized expression, denoting at once and associatively (1) the state of living or being, (2) personality, (3) age or ancientness (or both), and (4) either femininity or maternity (much more probably the latter), this inchoate condition of the term being quite in accord with other characters of the Seri tongue, and frequently paralleled among other primitive languages. The syllable *koak* (or *kak*, and probably *kok*, *koj*, *kokh*, etc.) would seem to be a still more vague and colloidal term, despite the fact that it is used separately to designate the fire-drill. There are fairly decisive indications that it is composite, the initial portion denoting place and the final portion perhaps more vaguely connoting class or kind with an implication of excellence, both elements appearing in various vocables (too numerous to quote). On the whole, *koak* would appear to be a typical egocentric or ethnocentric term, designating and dignifying Person, Place, Time,

I: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

UPAN GUAIMAS—1905; [Kantwig?], Noticias Ensayo, p. 238.
UPANGUAIMA—1861; Orozco y Berra, Geografía de las Lenguas, p. 42.
UPANGUAIMAS—1879; Malte-Brun, Congrès International des Américanistes, tome II, p. 38.
UPANGUAYMA—Synthetic form.
UPANGUAYMAS—1882; Bancroft, Works (Native Races, vol. I, p. 603).
UPAN-GUAYMAS—1890; Bandelier, Investigations in the Southwest, p. 73.

Possibly the name *Cocomaques* (1864, Orozco y Berra, Geografía de las Lenguas, p. 42), or *Cocomaques* (1727, Rivera, Diario y Derrotero, I, 1514–1519) should be introduced among the synonyms of the Seri, but in the absence of definite information it may perhaps better be left unassigned.[1]

Of the four tribes assigned to the stack, the Upanguayma have been extinct probably for more than a century; the Guayma may survive in a few representatives probably of mixed blood and adopted language; the Tepoka have never received systematic investigation, but appear to survive in limited numbers on the eastern coast of Gulf of California about the embouchure of the Rio Ignacio sand-wash; while the Seri alone continue to form a prominent factor in Sonoran thought.

External Relations

The most conspicuous characteristic of the Seri tribe as a whole is isolation. The geographic position and physical features of their habitat favor, and indeed measurably compel, isolation: their little principality is protected on one side by stormy seas and on the other by still more forbidding deserts; their home is too hard and poor to tempt conquest, and their possessions too meager to invite spoliation; hence, under customary conditions, they never see neighbors save in chance encounters on their frontier or in their own predatory forays—and in either case the encounters are commonly inimical. The natural isolation of the habitat is reflected in modes of life and habits of thought; and during the ages the physical isolation has come to be reflected in a bitter and implacable hereditary enmity toward aliens—an enmity apparently forming the strongest motive in their life and thought, and indeed grown into a persistent instinct. Thus the Seri stand alone in every respect; they are isolated in habitat and still more intensely isolated in habits of thought and life from all contemporaries; they far out-Ishmael the Ishmael of old on Araby's deserts.

The isolation of the Seri in thought and feeling is well illustrated by the relations with their nearest neighbors (activitally as well as geographically), the Papago Indians. The Papago are much esteemed in Sonora as fearless fighters, always ready to join or even to lead a forlorn hope; yet when the expedition of 1895 was projected it was found no easy matter to induce the picked Papago guards quartered at Costa Rica to enter Seriland. They were ready, indeed mildly eager, for fray, provided it were on the frontier; but they held back in dread

[1] By no means should refer to be Yumas, cf. Cocopa, Cocomaricopa, Kohon, etc.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

from actual invasion of the territory of the hereditary enemy. Like representatives of the faith-dominated culture-grades generally, they spoke weightily of inherent rights descended from the ancient time, even back unto the creation; they repeatedly declared the right of the Seri to protect their territory because it was *theirs;* yet their converse but served to show the depth and persistence of their abhorrence of the Seri and of everything pertaining to them. And when gales arose to delay the work, when the frail craft of the party was storm buffeted and lost for days, when they were seized with the strange sickness of the sea, when the salt and sugar mysteriously disappeared (having been secretly sacrificed to diminish suffering from thirst), when all of the earth-powers and air-powers seemed to be arrayed against the expedition, they stoically held it to be but just punishment for a sacrilegious infraction of the ancient law—and their steady adherence to duty, despite tradition and physical difficulty and constant danger, revealed a real heroism. The strain was no slight one; it may have been felt more by the stay-at-homes than by the men in action; certainly a sister of one of the party (Anton Castillo) and spouse of a supporter at the supply station broke under the strain, and died of her terrors—and the return of the party was, to the Papago women and children at least, as the rising of the dead. The dread inspired by the personal presence of the alien is stronger still; when the Seri rancheria at Costa Rica was visited in 1894 it was found needful to keep the Papago interpreter and others of the tribe at a distance, since the mere sight of the inimical tribesmen threw even the women and children into watchful irritation, like that of range-bred horses at scent of bear or timber-wolf, or that of oft-harried cats and swine at sight of passing dog—they instinctively huddled into circles facing outward, and ceased to think connectedly under the stress of nervous tension. The irritation was so far mutual that it was days before the usually placid interpreter, Jose Lewis, recovered his normal spirits; while the 1895 interpreter, Hugh Norris, was actually rendered ill by the mere entrance into Seriland at Pozo Escalante. And the antipathy between Seri and Yaqui is nearly as great as that between the common-boundary neighbors.

The instinctive antagonism, or race antipathy, between the Seri and the widely distinct Caucasian is less trenchant and intense than the local antipathy; yet even between Seri and Caucasian there would seem to be hardly a germ of sympathy. In the days of his prime, the Tiburon islanders flocked around Don Pascual, first as a provider of easy provender and later as a superpotent shaman whose wrath bore destruction; yet their allegiance was never more than that of the cowed and beaten brute to a hated trainer, and his coming never brought a smile to their stolid features—indeed, his passage among their jacales was met with the same stolid yet sinister indifference accorded the solitary visitor to a menagerie of caged carnivores. And no sooner did his vision become

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1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

142 Mashém (aged about 50 years), who had a few gray strands about the
145 temples; but it may be significant that the hair of the tribal outlaw Kolusio, who has lived with white men for full three score years, is iron-gray. Kolusio's pelage is trimmed in Caucasian fashion; that of Mashém
[115] is cut off mid-length in a manner exciting comment, if not derision, on the part of his fellows and others, and resulting in his (Spanish)
[302] sobriquet, Pelado (literally, Peeled, or idiomatically, Shorn); but with few exceptions the hair is kept long as it can be made to grow, and receives careful attention to this end. Naturally the length is somewhat variable; in many cases it depends to or slightly below the waist, while in other cases it merely sweeps the shoulders; and in general it appears to increase in both length and luxuriance not only throughout adolescence, but up to late maturity, for the best pelages are presented by moderately aged persons, while none of the youths are so luxuriantly tressed as their elders. Not the slightest trace of baldness appears. The infantile pelage is short, brownish in color, soft or even silky, and inclined to curl toward the tips. It is not until the age of several months that the hair begins to acquire the adult character, and at least some children retain traces of the infantile pilary character up to 5 or even 10 years; and none of the children display such jet-black shock-heads as are frequently found among other tribes, whose adult pelage may nevertheless be much less luxuriant than that of the Seri. On the whole, it may be said that the Seri hair is luxuriant and vigorous beyond the aboriginal average, and that it, like various other somatic features, indicates a relatively late maturation in the life-history of the individual.

Both sexes are beardless. The female faces seen were entirely free of
142 strong pilary growth; one or two of the warrior faces showed scattering hairs, and Mashém sported a feeble and downy but jet-black mustache with an exceptional number of scattered hairs about the chin; while Kolusio shaved regularly, and might, apparently, have grown moderately stiff but straggling mustaches and beard. Axillary hair seems to be wanting; pubic hair is said to be scanty; otherwise the bodies are practically hairless (more nearly so than those of average Caucasians).

The teeth are solid, close-set, and even, and impress the observer as large; they close with the upper incisors projecting slightly beyond the lower denture in the usual manner.

The skeletal characteristics of the Seri are known only from a single
128 specimen obtained in the course of the 1895 expedition in such manner
141 as to establish the identification beyond shadow of question. This skeleton was submitted to Dr Aleš Hrdlička for measurement and discussion.[1]

In making his examination, Dr Hrdlička compared the unquestion-

[1] A separate cranium was obtained by the 1895 expedition, having been sought and picked up by a Mexican member of the party in corroboration of his account of the killing of one of the Seri; but, in view of the possibility of erroneous identification, this skull was not submitted in connection with

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

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MASHEM, SERI INTERPRETER

[p. 146 A]

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

186 pitiful case of Fray Crisóstomo Gil, and otherwise rising explosively
648 beyond the feeble control of the untrained mind; for the impulse of enmity toward aliens is an ever-present possession—or obsession—of the tribe, and a reflection of that race-sense which is their most distinctive attribute.

726 Of open warfare and face-to-face fighting there is hardly a germ among the Seri. When themselves ambushed or surrounded, some of their stouter warriors have in a few instances faced the foe for a few minutes at a time, as is shown by the annals of Cerro Prieto; yet this accidental attitude but betokens the play of chance rather than the plan of choice. Concordantly, the folk avoid the method of warfare (so common among other Amerind tribes as to be properly considered characteristic) involving open duel between chiefs and other warriors; they seem to be devoid of that sense of fairness in fighting which finds expression in the duel; and despite the individual advantages growing out of gigantic stature, immense strength, and superior swiftness, they habitually seek to combine in numbers against panicked or baffled enemies, just as their hunters throw themselves mercilessly on surrounded quarry. Of open boldness or confident prowess no trace appears; and the body of facts seems to justify the prevailing Sonoran opinion that the warfare of the Seri is treacherous and cowardly in design, craven and cruel in execution.

Once begun, the conduct of the fray by the Seri fighters is fairly uniform; the warriors either discharge clouds of arrows from their coigns of vantage, or rush to brain their victims with stones, or to break their necks and limbs and crush in their chests, as in the slaughtering of quarry; and according to the tale of the occasional survivors—Señor Pascual Encinas and his son Manuel, Don Ygnacio
[115] Lozania, Don Andrés Noriega, Don Jesus Omada of Bacuachito, and Don Ramon Noriega of Pozo Noriega, are among the survivors and informants; also the stardy Papago fighters, Mariano, Anton, Miguel, and Anton Castillo (whose sister died of dread while he was on the 1895 expedition)—the rushing warriors are transfigured with frenzy; their eyes blaze purple and green, their teeth glisten through snarling lips, their hair half rises in bristling mane, while their huge chests swell and their lithe limbs quiver in a fury sudden and blind and overpowering as that of springing puma or charging peccary. Of the successful assaults the ghastly end is rarely recorded, though whispered large in the lore of Sonora; in the unsuccessful assaults recounted by survivors the blood-frenzy burned but briefly and died swiftly as the disappointed warriors skulked silently behind rocks and shrubs, or fled across the sands with inconceivable fleetness. These details of battle precisely parallel the details of butchery of beastly quarry, as recounted by local observers and corroborated by Mashém's recitals.

266 So far as can be ascertained the parallelism between frenzied battling
727 and furious butchery in the chase affords the chief basis for the firm

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

the character of the man; in very fact, it at the same time both measures and makes the character of the woman. Among other privileges bestowed on the bride during the probationary period are those of receiving the most intimate attentions from the clanfellows of the groom; and these are noteworthy as suggestions of a vestigial polyandry or adelphogamy. At the close of the year the probation ends in a feast provided by the probationer, who thereupon enters the bride's jacal as a perpetual guest of unlimited personal privileges (subject to tribal custom); while the bride passes from a half-wanton heyday into the duller routine of matronly existence.

These details were elicited at Costa Rica in 1894 through methodical inquiries made in connection with the linguistic collection. This collection was made with the cooperation of Señor Alvemar-Léon as Spanish-English interpreter, together with Mashém and (commonly) the clanmother known as Juana María. Usually quite a group of Seri matrons with two or three warriors were gathered about, and to these Mashém frequently appealed for advice and verification, while they constantly expressed approval or disapproval of questions and replies, as gathered through Mashém's words and mien, in such manner as to afford a fair index of their habitual thought—e. g., when the Seri vernacular for "twins" was obtained and the inquiry was extended (by normal association of ideas) to the term for "triplets", Mashém collapsed into moody silence while the rest of the group decamped incontinently with horror-stricken countenances—thereby suggesting cautious subsequent inquiry, and the discovery that triplets are deemed evil monsters and their production a capital crime. It was in one of the earlier conferences that the first intimations concerning the unusual marital customs were incidentally brought out; the Caucasian interpreter and bystanders were diverted by the naive reference to the moral test, but their expressions were hastily checked lest the native informants might be startled and rendered secretive; then, during two later conferences, when Mashém and several matrons were freely participating in the proceedings, the line of inquiry was so turned as to touch on various aspects of the marriage custom and bring out all essential features; so that much confidence is reposed in the accuracy of the details.[1] The confidence in the verity of the customs was such as not to be impaired seriously by the fact that no records of coincident moral tests were known in the voluminous literature of marriage and its concomitants; nor was it shaken by the still weightier fact that none of the experienced ethnologists to whom inquiries were addressed during ensuing months were acquainted with parallel customs—indeed the only shadow of corroboration thus obtained came in the form of references to the widespread requirement of continence in war and ceremonies.

[1] It may be observed that Kolonia, when visited in January, 1895, failed to corroborate the descriptions of Mashém and the matrons, but his failure occasioned little surprise for the reason that he had not lived with his tribe since early boyhood, and is equally uninformed (or uncommunicative) concerning the myths, ceremonies, and even the history of the tribe.

2: Kroeber E-5 (1930) 1931 NU31 Seri NU31

NEW DATA

Informants' Attitude

Most of my information was obtained from Chico Romero, the present official chief, a man of about 38. Santo Blanco and one or two other men contributed occasionally. Sr. Thomson was present most of the time and aided materially, both in encouraging the Seri and in helping to formulate questions suitably to their experience and comprehension. For instance, he repeatedly cleared up points in the kinship system by applying his knowledge of the actual relationship of Seri individuals, or their acquaintance with his relatives, to frame concrete cases, real or hypothetical, for which a denomination was then readily given. Without this aid, the system could not have been obtained with either reasonable surety or correctness. So far as possible, direct questions were replaced by giving to the Seri accounts of customs attributed to the Cocopa, of whose existence they know, and suggesting comparisons, in which they proved interested. On the whole, their attitude was friendly, coöperative, and appeared unsecretive. Concealment may be so automatic a habit with them that they practice it without giving a sign; but I had the constant impression that they told little about their religion because they knew little, and not from any skilfully concealed reluctance. Still, all negative statements must be regarded as only tentative when secured in a brief time through an imperfect medium of communication from informants not accustomed to mental exertion.

Historical Tradition

There were formerly four tribes, according to the informant: to the East, the Seris, at Pueblo de los Seris (the ex-mission, across the river from Hermosillo); to the West, the Tiburones, on the island; to the North, at Tepoca, the Xeka'aikô'ye; to the South, at Tastiota, the Antepkê'itaX or Tastioteños. Too many died at Pueblo Seris, so they joined the Tiburones. They fought the northern and southern groups. Sixty (or 68) Seri-Tiburones once went to Tepoca to kill a man and his two sons. They made marks and stuck a knife in the trail to cause them to stop. Then they shot them. The women and children were captured, taken to the island and kept, the women first being abused by the whole party. The informant's son José Manuel (13) had a Tepoca maternal grandmother; that is, the informant, now about 38, married the daughter of a Tepoca woman. (This would put the incident hardly earlier than 1860 or later than 1890.) Similarly, there is Tastioteño blood among the present Seri. The dialects of the several tribes are said to have been distinct, though allied.

It is evident that these memories cover only the last part of the period of Spanish contacts.

2: Kroeber E-5 (1930) 1931 NU31 Seri NU31

ing, because it would be swamped in a sea which it could resist. The joining and calking are always carried far enough that the boat can be bailed faster than it leaks. That the Seri prefer to bail rather than to finick over joints, is a matter of preference. Most of our real frontier life runs on much the same plan, though sprung from a tradition of intrinsic standard and provided with a superior tool equipment. Tribes like the Walapai and Papago, who live in nearly the same desert, show much of the Seri combination of technological crudeness and effectiveness. They do make an exception in basketry, which is what has chiefly reached our museum cases from their culture; but the Davis-Heye collection shows that the Seri too can make baskets of unsuspected quality. My impression, based on the way the Seri handle their knives, boats, bows, and the like, is that they have excellent practical mechanical sense, but that their standards are astonishingly different from our own. Most people that depended so much on sailing their boats as the modern Seri do, would not be content with two sticks, a blanket, and a harpoon line. But, given the willingness to operate with this equipment, very few would be as successful in quickly rigging and skilfully handling the sail. And sailing is something the Seri have recently learned or evolved. They are the frontiersmen of native culture: hardy, rude, unorganized, practical, efficient; but, like our own frontiersmen, in no sense only half emerged from the tool-less animal. McGee was so inspired by the desire to find ultimate "primitiveness" among the Seri that he often ignored the tremendous effect of their habitat which he so well observed and described. After all, in his day cultural evolutionism was still in vogue.

As to race sense, McGee seems partly but only partly right. Chico Romero of his own accord asked me if other Indians had venereal diseases, and on the return question replied that the Seri were entirely free from them. I also saw and heard of no half-breeds. On the other hand, Chico's historical tradition told of the violation and keeping of captive Tepoca women, and since his own son was descended from one of them, in the second generation, Chico's mother-in-law must have been a Tepoca. McGee's "alien conjugal union" as the "blackest crime" (p. 11) is therefore an exaggeration, and his informant's statement that a Papago woman captive among the Seri never could have had children because she was an alien slave (p. 278), must rest upon a misunderstanding.

The groom's continence for a year after marriage as a moral test before admission to full husbandly status (pp. 280-3), is probably a matriarchally colored fantasy based on another misunderstanding. As already mentioned, Chico was interested, but mildly ribaldly amused, at the idea when it was put before him as a foreign Indian custom. He reacted like the average white man under the circumstances, not in the least like an actor skilfully feigning ignorance.

2: Kroeber E-5 (1930)1931 NU31 Seri NU31

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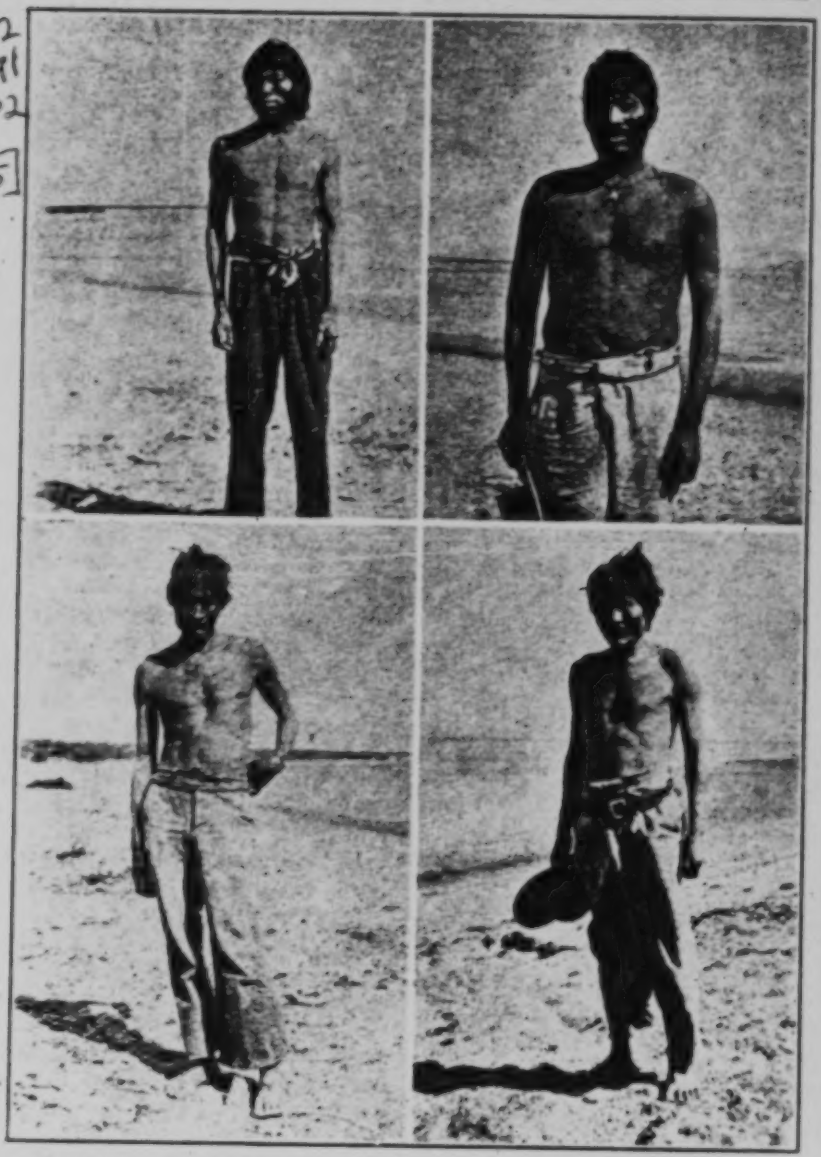


FIG. 1 (upper left). *Young man with long hair.*

FIG. 2 (upper right). *Chico Romero, official Seri chief and principal informant. The largest individual seen.*

FIG. 3 (lower left). *Elderly man of the spare Seri type.*

FIG. 4 (lower right). *Native policeman for the Mexican government.*

Spicer E-5 (1963-1965)1982 MU31 Seri MU31

Seri alike, is acquainted (Cougar, Jaguar, Whale, etc.) questioning had been done by referring to such and such beast without the use of pictures or actual specimens. This procedure had been followed for the majority of mammals, which are well enough known in the area. But otherwise, questioning had been done with actual specimens in hand, alive where possible. This was owing to the fact that response may be different to the dead specimens than to the live ones and grew out of a conviction (entirely substantiated in the course of work) that many animals, of a small variety especially, are recognized more by their distinctive behaviour pattern, flight, selection of habitat, voice, running posture, etc., than by the shape and form alone. All invertebrates, all reptiles and all but the best known and largest fish had produced the data from actual specimens, dead or alive. Finally, where neither common colloquial name nor specimens were available, I resorted to pictures. That way I obtained data for a small number of animals and for a good many birds. This method has its weakness. The line drawings in the excellent guide to the *Birds of Mexico* by Blake I used are somewhat on the "dead" side and may be good aid in bird identification to someone who also will read the text, but they often fail to be of much use to someone who rarely has seen the drawings in any book, let alone a bird guide. From the replies it was obvious that a certain amount of misidentification took place in the naming of the birds or mammals from the sketches. I took account of this and eliminated from consideration all those forms where misidentification on the part of the informant was obvious. This in itself may be a worthwhile object of study but it was not my concern at the moment.

In working with the informants I studiously avoided giving them any suggestion that I already knew what the animal was or that I had a fair idea about the general features of its natural history. This is especially important in considering the Seris' knowledge of the animal distribution, ecology and other salient features. When available, I often brought along specimens of species I knew did not occur in Desemboque which had been captured elsewhere, in the absence of the Seris. This was in order to test better their recognition of animal forms.

Altogether 10 informants had been used. Of these the bulk were questioned in 1953, some again in 1955 and that year Chico Romero, now an old man of over 70, had been also added to the roster. Chico was Kroeber's star informant in 1930 and from him came the bulk of Kroeber's original information.

The two main informants were Miguel Barnett, then aged about 45 and one of the Seris' best hunters, and Jose Juan Moreno, a fellow about 25, recognized as their best fisherman. As expected, their preoccupations and interests slanted their replies. Accordingly, Jose Juan had the best knowledge of the marine animals and Miguel of the terrestrial animals. Jose Juan aided me again with some information in 1955.

Other informants were as follows: Juan Torres, aged 40 or so; Ramon Montayo, one of the

[P.48]

Sonora E-5 (1953-1955)1962 MU31 Seri MU31

115 [165] oldest Seris then alive of over 70; Ramon Corrales, claiming to be 37 and on the dim-witted side; Jesus Montanyo, a quiet, cooperative man of 21; Natcheo Molina, aged 35 or so, whose interest in the protestant hymnals was unfortunately far greater than in giving me the information I wanted; Jose Manuel Romero, about 37 years old on his own claim; and Jose Barnett, Miguel's son, 825 aged 14. Inclusion of young Barnett was a lucky strike because it indicated clearly differences in the natural history knowledge between the older men and the young men, later confirmed also in the incidental questioning of several young boys. [868] Young men start out with general interest in animals of all sorts, including the small invertebrates, but as they grow up they end up with solid knowledge of economically important species and slim, forgotten knowledge of the insignficant invertebrates.

124 I made an endeavor to obtain the same sort of information from several informants in order to eliminate as far as possible aberrant answers or peculiarities. The most solid information is available for the mammals, which are, of course, well-known. Here in some cases the same kind of information had been obtained from five individuals. In other instances only two to three were available and sometimes only one. What was surprising about the information given were not the differences, which I often indicated in the text, but the amount if identical agreement on almost every single item of data between different individuals.

Since it was impossible to obtain information on all animals from the same individuals, the questioning proceeded in "blocks." By this I mean, I would question for example two individuals about the entire order of mammals (every species of them) and another two on the birds. Two other individuals then would be questioned on half of the birds and half of the mammals, while the other two on half of the reptiles and half of the fishes; still another two on half of the insects and half of the marine invertebrates, while others would yet cover all of the insects or reptiles or fishes independently. This I believe is a useful procedure. It allows to test generalized concepts of natural history for several individuals for diverse groups. It is motivated by the question of no little importance. What does so-and-so know about mammals and what does he know about birds? What are his generalized ideas of each group? It [825] had been soon discovered that when it concerns special points, the informants were apt to have standardized notions of what the animals did, regardless of the actual situation. The less actual observational knowledge they actually had, the more frequent were pat replies. Obvious demonstration of this helped a great deal to eliminate such pat answers or to recognize them for what they were and to account for them in the final analysis.

000 Another point in the procedure is of par-
[P.5A]

9:Malkin E-5 (1953-1955)1962 NU31 Seri NU31

III

MAMMALS

Scientific	Common Name
Antrozous pallidus	Pallid bat
Bassariscus astutus	Ringtail cat (Cacomistle)
Spilogale gracilis	Spotted skunk
Taxidea taxus	Badger
Urocyon cinereoargenteus or *Vulpes macrotis*	Grey fox or kit fox
Canis latrans	Coyote
Felis concolor	Mountain Lion.
Felis onca	Jaguar
Felis eyra	Juguarundi
Zalophus californianus	California sea lion
Dipodomys sp.?	Kangaroo rat
Erethizon dorsatum	Porcupine
Lepus californicus	Blacktailed rabbit
Sylvilagus audubonii	Desert cottontail
Pecari angulatus	Peccary
Odocoileus hemionus	Mule Deer
Ovis canadensis	Bighorn
Eschrichtius glaucus	California grey whale
Orcinus rectipinna	Killer whale
Tursiops gillii	Bottlenosed dolphin

Identification here has been obtained largely with an aid of field guides or by mentioning a colloquial local name of the mammal in Spanish. All these were later checked by Dr. Robert T. Orr of the California Academy of Sciences. While there is no doubt of the identity of the most common forms, such as peccary or sea-lion, there are also several of the identifications which can't be certain either because of inadequate line drawings or lack of specimens, either alive at a distance or even parts of them. In this somewhat dubious category are Ringtail cat, Jaguarundi and the Killer whale.

On the other hand, there is no doubt as to the identity of the following: Pacific pale bat, badger, bighorn, coyote, kangaroo rat, blacktail rabbit, cottontail jackrabbit, deer and dolphin. Live, free or captive individuals, or part of them, such as horns, hide or skulls were available.

Economic Uses

Food: Only 6 out of 21 species for which information is available are used today as food. Three more were mentioned as "eaten in the past" and one more as "possibly eaten in the past." Since the oldest of the informants who provided this data, Miguel Barnett, is a man in his fifties (and it is he who talked most often about the animals "eaten in the past but not now") we may surmise that these were part of the Seri diet 25-45 years ago, that is between 1910-1930.

Five species are important as a supplementary source of food: the bighorn, the deer, peccary and both species of rabbits. Some, the deer especially, are considered to be delicacies. The sixth species is the badger but it appears neither important nor frequently killed. I saw one badger captured by José Juan Moreno. The animal was tied to the pole, and kept as a pet, fed on fish, snake and

9:Malkin E-S (1963-1969)1962 MU31 Seri MU31

Daily Rhythm

*825 Here again data are most fragmentary and available only for seven species. But what information the Seris gave overwhelmingly suggests good orientation in such matters. Six of the species were correctly described as diurnal and only one, the barn owl, as nocturnal. This is with a qualification for the brown pelican. Of it Moreno, who [115] provided the bulk of the ornithological information, said "it flies and feeds in daytime, but when it is hungry and when food is short it'll then feed at night as well."

Moreno's explanation is somewhat difficult to understand. How does he know that the pelican is hungrier at certain times than at others? But it is true that the brown pelicans occasionally float and fish at night.

But one must consider the limitations of the data. Out of numerous species of owls present in the region, we have information only for one. Nor is there any for the nightjars.

The usual explanation for the birds' inactivity at night is sleep. In few instances the place of rest has been specified. Accordingly, the dove sleeps on trees and the duck ashore.

Habitat Ecology

Some of birds' preferences for particular spots have already been indicated in discussing the nesting habits.

Habitat preferences had been indicated for the vast majority of the species under discussion, in connection with various activities. Almost all shore or marine birds were thus indicated. This knowledge included the curlew and the willet and the sand-piper, all of which were described as "walking along the shore," although nothing else had been said about them. The bittern, the ibis and the egret on the other hand, the Seris think, have a distinct liking for muddy locations and the mangroves—all of which the informants pointedly explained. This is why, they said, they favored [137] Estero Sargente, an area of evil smelling muddy mangroves where they find food and nesting GROUNDS

[P 71A]

Unfinished Book Manuscript

114 At the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation in New York City where I was staying temporarily _____, I was asked by Mr. Heye where I would like to go on my next collecting trip for the Museum. I had already covered the whole of southern half of Arizona and had made thorough collections from Pima, Papago, Maricopa, Apache, Hualapai and other tribes, and had also covered Southern California and its deserts.

For many years I had read every scrap of information about the treacherous Seri Indians of the Island of Tiburon---off Mexico, and was greatly intrigued with these wild primitive natives. My theory has always been that the farther away from civilization a tribe is located, the better chance to secure original or aboriginal material, so I asked Mr. Heye if he had anything from the Seri Indians of Tiburon Island, and he said: "Not a thing, nor any other museum."

"Well, I think I'll go to Tiburon in March," I said.

He said, "I wouldn't advise it. You know their reputation. No white man landing on that mysterious Island has ever returned. They are the most treacherous Indians in North America, and Tiburon Island is a good place to stay away from."

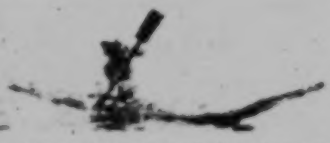
114 123 [115] Nevertheless, I went to Hermosillo, capital of the State of Sonora, Mexico, and there I met and engaged Roberto Thomson, whose father had treated with kindness some of the Seris who had reached his ranch, and he, Roberto, thought we could land on the Island and, by considerate treatment, make friends with these wild *Tiburones*. It seemed as if we were flying into the face of certain death from their reputation, but we met these people, and by gifts and fair treatment, we became good friends, and from that time in 1922 to the present, that friendship has endured unbroken.

I have the absolute freedom of the Island, and have visited there at least six times. I have been through the Island on all its coasts and am familiar with its wild inhabitants.

123 As a concrete result of that first trip to Tiburon, I secured a
• 115 *balsa* (boat) made of *carrizo* canes lashed together with native fibre,
581 which *balsa* Mr. Heye said it was the finest one in North America.

[226] This *balsa* was given to me without hesitation, although it furnished one or two families with sea food.

115 I wish to pay tribute to Senor Roberto Thomson who has been my constant companion, friend, guide and interpreter during the past twenty years, on all my trips to Tiburon and various parts of Mexico. I found him absolutely dependable, using excellent judgment in critical situations. He was honest, fair, intelligent, looking out constantly for my safety and comfort always, enduring hardships cheerfully. A better all-round out-door man I have never seen equaled. In short, he is a *real hombre*, and *muy simpatico*.



13 Tiburon, or *Shark Island*, long noted for its evil reputation as
181 the home of the most savage and treacherous Indians of North America,
193 lies in latitude 29° north and 112°30' west longitude, in the Gulf of California. It is shaped like a parallelogram about thirty-five miles long and eighteen to twenty miles wide, and lies parallel to the coast of Sonora, Mexico, of which, no doubt, at some remote period, it once formed a part.

It is separated from the mainland, for the most part, by a strait called *El Infernillo*, or The Little Hell, through which the rising
[127] tides pour a resistless flood. It is a desert island and supports a desert arboreal vegetation which includes several varieties of the cactus family and the *mesquite, palo verde, palo fierro, torote, palo blanco, ocotillo* and others. The giant *saguaro, sarbueso* and *pitahalla (pit-o-haya)* cactus are found here also.

Two desert ranges run lengthwise of the Island, which, on its westward or windward side, terminate in sea-worn cliffs against whose ramparts dash the heavy breakers of the Gulf, and on its eastern side, by long alluvial aprons from the foot of the mountains, sloping gently down to the lovely shell-strewn beaches. From this side the foot of the mountains lies from two to five miles distant. On this, the leeward side of Tiburon, the sea is much calmer, and often, in the early morning, it is as smooth and placid as a lake, reflecting each rosy, lavender and purple tint of the rugged Sierra Seri along the Sonoran coast, as in a mirror. The exquisite loveliness of marvelous sunrises over the pure limpid waters of the *Estrecho Infernillo* is mystical.

134 The soil is loose and sandy, unsuitable for cultivation, and im-
241 possible for producing domestic crops of any
142 kind.

175 if they were as hungry then as they are today, they would not stop to
648 spike a man up preparatory to serving him. Their only tools then were
266 rocks to use as hammers and hoop iron for knives, and these are in
114 universal use today.

[412] There is no doubt that the men were killed, but I think these mining men purposely exaggerated their findings, if any.

648 There is no doubt that the Seris were brave fighters, treacherous
721 murderers, sparing neither men, women or children on their raids,
727 killing ruthlessly. But there is one charge which cannot be brought against them, which cannot be said of many tribes north of the border. So far as I could find out, they never tortured nor scalped.

648 The Seris never took prisoners and they never inter-married with
721 other tribes, so their strain is pure.

727 There was one exception. Sixty or seventy years ago, the Seri
583 Chief Coyote Iguana and his band of warriors held up the stage between Hermosillo and Guaymas, and killed all except a handsome Spanish girl of the better class. This girl, Coyote Iguana made his wife and by her raised a family. One granddaughter still survived in 1924, and while more attractive than the general run of Seri, her complexion was fully as dark.

604 The Seris, Ishmaelites among the native tribes of Mexico---the most fascinating Indians in North America!

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123 *Reception Committee, Tiburon Island - 1938*

115 On the twenty-fifth of April, nineteen twenty-two, I engaged the services of Roberto Thompson, who with his father and grandfather

[text continues on p. 149]

[23 before him, has been a friend of the Seris for years. It was his father
• [15] who brought McGee to Tiburon in 1895, and in many ways they have shown kindness to the Seris.

[22] I hired an auto-truck for fifty dollars to take the necessary people and supplies. These supplies consisted of some fine-tooth combs, needles, thread, one bolt of white muslin, 150-pounds of flour, panoche, saws, nails, harmonicas, little round mirrors, fish twine, hooks, 2-bits and other things.

We left at 6:30 a.m. With us was the driver Ricardo, his friend Rafael Ysabel, son of an ex-governor of Sonora. When we reached Bob's ranch, *El Providencia*, five or more miles out, we added a one-eyed Mexican and Bob's brother.

After a simple dinner at the ranch house we drove across the mouth of the Sonora river, a broad, flat alluvial plain probably four or five miles across. We circled about and turned north, stopping at the edge of a broad shallow bay. The tide was down and the shore was slimy mud and filled at places with sharp-edged clam and oyster shells. There were oyster flats at the edge of the mud, so Roberto and the Mexican waded out and secured enough of them for supper.

[3] During the day we ran close to a Gila monster, a horrid looking black and orange mottled fat lizard who waddled along. Rafael held his head with a rifle, reached down and caught him in back of the head, and held him up. He hissed like a snake and bears a bad reputation.

[33] The country was flat and the road pretty good. Detached mountains we passed during the day and one range called *Siete Cerros*, Seven Mountains, with peaks all in one row, reached for fifteen or twenty miles. We passed a few ranches where the people were pumping water from wells or hauling in the old turn-table way with a mule and rawhide buckets. Then we made camp, got everything ready for an early start the next day and turned in.

At dawn three men took the boat with all our traps and groceries and fifteen gallons of fresh water, and Rafael and I walked up to the point to meet it. Louis and the driver and truck returned to the ranch. The weeds and ground were very wet and we came to some sloughs filled with soft ooze. These were impossible to cross, so we went around them and then decided to strike for the ocean side and go along a sand bank. This we did, and when we reached the end we saw the boat waiting for us half a mile or more across a great flat.

[33] The ocean view was grand. A great rock, *Alcatraz Island*, protruded from the sea a short distance out, on which countless cormorants roost and raise their young. Bob often gathers their eggs.

We reached the boat and climbed in and pushed off into deep water. There was no wind and the tide was part way against us, but we rowed, three of us, for many many miles. We landed in a small cove, drew up

[text continues on p.15]

Roberto Thomson waving white bandera as signal of peace. In the Gulf - Sonora. April 26, 1922

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Pulling the boat up the beach above high tide - Kino Bay and Alcatraz Island - 1936

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10: Davis E-5 (1922-ca. 1939) 1966 NU31 Seri NU31

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Irene Thomson, Pancha Olivarria and Roberto Thomson at Tecomate, on north coast, spending whole ribs cast up on the beach. Although thoroughly dried and bleached for years by a semitropic sun, it took their united efforts to elevate these ribs.---E.H.D.

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Roberto Thomson, Santo Blanco and Edward H. Davis

123 but nothing happened.

123 622 [115] We reached Hermosillo at three in the afternoon, and as we landed Roberto and Sara met us, and Roberto embraced me. Then the Seri Indian Chief rushed up and fairly hugged me in his joy at seeing me again. A timid wild-looking Seri boy, of fifteen years of age, shyly shook hands with the *Americano*, while all the Mexican men and women, fully one hundred in number, looked on open-mouthed and wide-eyed, to see the Chief of the wildest and lowest of savage Indians in North America, rush up and embrace a white man.

We all climbed into Roberto's auto-truck, and my things were brought to Hotel Cohen, and then we all went to Roberto's home and stayed all the afternoon. He had just returned from the coast the day before, and Juan Tomas was determined to come also and greet me, and the boy---a nephew---hung on to the Chief, and finally Roberto said he would have to return on foot if he brought him. Juan Tomas said that made no difference. He would walk to the coast eighty or ninety miles, if only he could come.

[291] [302] He was probably seventy-five years old. He wore a hat, but his hair was straggly and he had a slight moustache. He wore shirt and trousers and a dirty kilt---remanent of the Pelican-skin-kilt---around his waist, and he was barefooted. The boy had a not unpleasant face, long wild hair, shirt, pants, and a cotton kilt reached to his knees. He, too, was barefooted.

I gave the Chief a knife, and the boy a red crayon and fifty cents. With the crayon he made a V on his kilt. He was very shy and always kept in a shadow, or in the background, and he spoke no Spanish although he knew the Spanish alphabet.

Sara showed some photographs and postcards in a baloptican in a dark room, and among them were pictures of some Seris and myself. These created much excitement with the Chief and the boy, and they jabbered together in the Seri language with animation. They recognized some of the subjects, their own people.

584 622 648 123 Juan Tomas is to be married soon to an elderly Seri dame, and we have been invited to attend the fiesta. He has been laying in the trousseau for the bride, and several gallons of mescal. A steer or burro will have to be provided, and all the fixin's and nothing will be left undone to make a very festive occasion. When asked to show us his gifts he reluctantly brought forth a package which he carefully unwrapped and disclosed eighteen yards of *manta*, two red pieces and one pink piece of Calico, some red handkerchiefs, and one box for painting the face. He carefully wrapped these up again and put them in the room set apart for him and the boy.

[609] [583] The woman he is to marry has no male relatives from whom she can be bought, so the Chief appointed a man and created him Uncle *pro-tempore*, and to him the Chief is going to give a rifle and a blanket as the purchase price. Pretty high!

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Giant Zárbueso cactus and Roberto -
Tiburon Island - March 20, 1924

so named must be of the same sex as the first. The significance of land ownership needs further investigation.

Many of the Seri still prefer, when possible, to live in their chosen band area. Sometimes a person, when he is approaching death, will ask to be taken to his own i?iziting, where he can die and be buried in the area of his choice.

NOTES

1. Due to printing limitations, stress on Seri words has been omitted, and several orthographic symbol changes have been made for this paper. The phonetic values of the symbols used are the following: p is voiceless labial stop; t is vl. dental stop; k is vl. velar stop; ? is glottal stop; f is vl. labial flat spirant; w is vl. labial grooved-rounded spirant; s is vl. alveolar spirant; x is vl. alveo-palatal spirant; l is vl. lateral spirant; h is vl. velar spirant; x is vl. back velar spirant; m is labial nasal; n is dental nasal; ng is velar nasal; y is palatal semivowel; i is a high close front vowel; e is a low close front vowel; a is a low open central vowel; o is a mid close back vowel.

2. These data were compiled during field trips to the Seri camps during the years 1956-61, the studies being carried out under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The principal informant was R. Herrera T. whose information was checked with and supplemented by nine of the older members of the tribe. I am indebted to my colleague, David Thomas, who read an earlier draft of this paper and made helpful suggestions.

3. 1) W. J. McGee, "The Seri Indians," *Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report*, No. 17, Part 1. Washington, 1898. 2) A. L. Kroeber, "The Seri," *Southwest Museum Papers*, No. 6. Los Angeles, 1931. 3) W. B. Griffen, "Notes on Seri Indian Culture, Sonora, Mexico," *Latin American Monograph Series*, No. 10, Gainesville, 1959.

4. It will be noted that between subdivision 3 and 4 on Fig. 3 there is an unnumbered area, the status of which is uncertain.

5. Kroeber states that McGee's concept of Seri maternal lineages crystallized into totemic clans with matron rule seem a fantasy. In Kroeber's opinion, "The Seri may never have had sibs or clans; but the fact that they appear to lack them now is no positive evidence that they were without them three centuries ago. Shifts of residence, contraction of territory, shrinkage of numbers, amalgamation of distinct bands, may well have obliterated much of such social fabric as they once possessed."

Griffen discusses the nature of the former Seri bands and states, "they may have been patrilineal and exogamous. The criteria . . . that Julian Steward has exposited for the formation of exogamous, patrilineal bands . . . are and presumably would have been met formerly in the Seri habitat." Griffen lists other aspects of this type of band which are also verified to some extent by his data. From reading his material, it is obvious that he suspects the existence of clans at some earlier period. He emphasizes the need for further investigation.

6. G. P. Murdock, *Social Structure*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1949.

7. Marriages were usually contracted within the band.

8. As Kroeber points out, their memory likely covers only the latter part of the period of Spanish contacts.

9. The Seri recall nothing of Seri-Pima contacts and little of Seri-Apache relations.

10. The story is related that one day some Seri entered a cave where they found several Papago jugs filled with seeds. Being hungry, the people ate the seeds and left some arrows as token payment. The Seri say that the Papago apparently believed the arrows were intended as an insult. Fighting broke out soon afterward.

11. The Seri concept of the band annihilations is seen to be in contradiction to McGee's statement (p. 132): "Concordantly with their primary characteristic, the Seri have avoided ethnic and demotic union beyond the narrow limits of their own kindred; and even of these they seem to have cast out parts, annihilating the Guayma and Upanguayma, displacing and nearly destroying the Tepoka, and outlawing individuals and (apparently) small groups."